DRS Delivers Advanced Electric Propulsion Equipment for Lead Columbia-Class Submarine

An artist's rendering of the future Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Leonardo DRS Inc. has successfully completed factory acceptance testing and shipment of the first production unit of the main propulsion motor for the U.S. Navy's new Columbia-class submarine, the company announced Aug. 30. The motor was recently shipped to General Dynamics Electric Boat for integration into the lead ship of the class.

DRS was chosen by Electric Boat and the U.S. Navy to design

and manufacture the major Columbia Electric Drive Propulsion system components including the main propulsion electric motor. All prototype components of this system successfully completed full power endurance and other testing at the Navy's land-based test facility in 2020, where operational testing continues. In addition to the main propulsion motor, other lead ship components are being manufactured and are also preparing to ship to Electric Boat.

The Columbia class program goal is to design and build a class of 12 new ballistic missile submarines to replace the U.S. Navy's current force of Ohio class SSBNs. The Navy has identified the Columbia-class program as its top priority program. The Columbia-class submarines will be larger than the current class in terms of submerged displacement and will become the largest submarine ever built by the United States.

The DRS Naval Power Systems business was awarded contracts for the electric propulsion system components which included design, test, qualification, and production of the full-scale components for both a land-based test facility and first two ships of the class. Over the past several years, the Navy has completed successful land-based tests of DRS' electric propulsion components. With significant testing completed, the program is transitioning to production with DRS presently manufacturing the components for the first two ships of the Columbia Class.

"We are proud to play a key role in developing and providing this capability for the U.S. Navy on this critical national defense asset," said Jon Miller, senior vice president and general manager of the DRS Naval Power business. "Our long history of providing innovative technology to the U.S. Navy and continuing this work for Electric Boat ensures our Sailors will be defending this country with the most advanced submarine in the world."